

2015 Industrial Hemp Agronomic Report Summary

During the first year of the Tennessee Industrial Hemp Pilot Program the Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA) issued 49 licenses. Five of those applicants dropped out of the program leaving 44 licensees (55 growers) growing industrial hemp on roughly 660 acres on 85 fields throughout 38 counties in Tennessee (Figure 1). According to the agronomic reports, the growers had over 574 years of experience in agriculture, with a mean of 10.6 years of farming experience. TDA purchased 39,440lbs of industrial hemp seed, which was distributed later than expected. The types of seed were Canda, Finola, CRS-1, CRS-2, CFX-1 and CHG. Canda was the most commonly planted variety, while the Finola cultivar was planted in the greatest amounts by fewer farmers (Figure 2). The greatest hindrance in the pilot program was the late arrival of the seeds due to a DEA permitting issue.

The first rounds of planting were from June-July. The average time from sowing to emergence was about one week. The average time from emergence to flower was two weeks and the average time from flower to harvest was eight weeks. Day length at time of planting caused the plants to flower at an earlier rate than expected. Newly planted crops were quickly overtaken by weeds. There are currently no herbicides registered by EPA for use in hemp, so all weed control had to be done by mechanical means. Other pests of concern for growers were wildlife and insects including turkey, deer and cutworms. The agronomic reports show that the growers spent approximately 10,000 hours working with the crop, at a cost of 100,000. Very little hemp was harvested due to the weed competition and fungal problems from the early summer wet weather.

Growers consistently reported frustration with the lack of resources to process any harvested product. Several growers recovered a small amount of seed and fiber from the 2015 hemp crop. The general consensus among growers was that early planting, different seed varieties and processing facilities are needed for hemp to be a successful crop in Tennessee.

Disclaimer: This information was analyzed using the agronomic reports and is only as accurate as the data collected from the growers.

Figure 1. 2015 Growing Locations

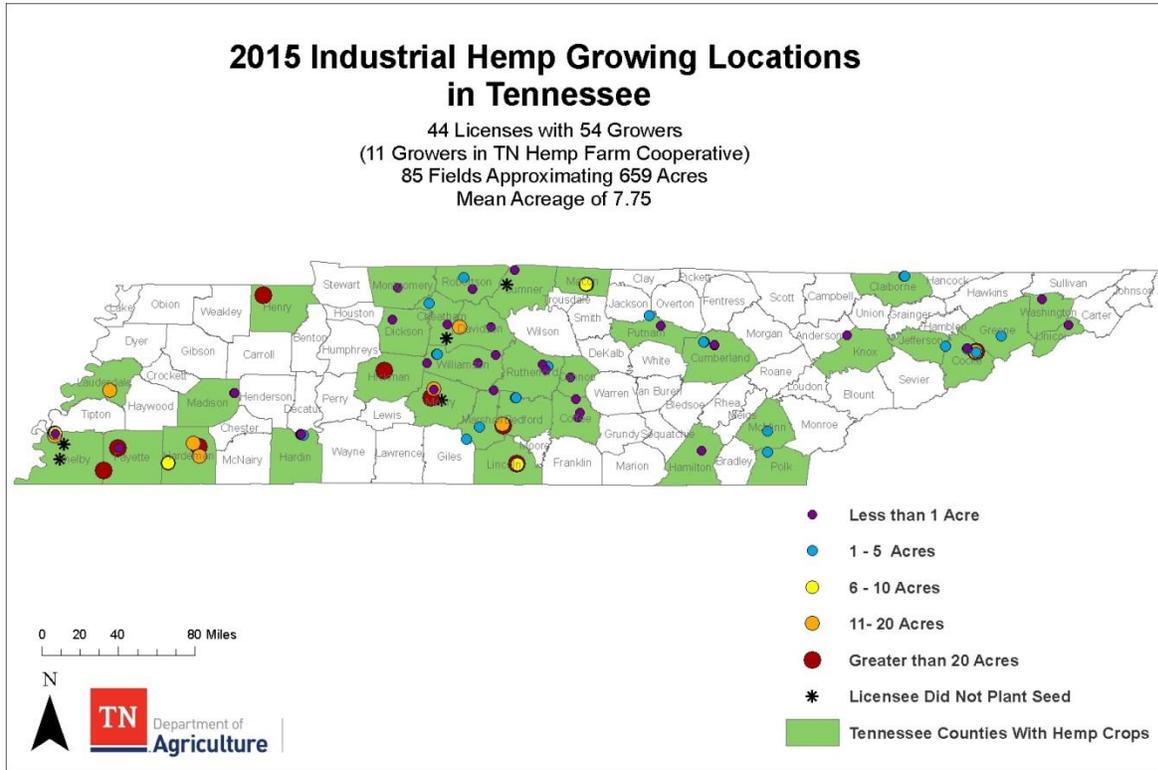


Figure 2. Types of seed varieties grown

